

education as clinical social workers. Social workers have been recognized by Medicare for 10 years.

Seniors, of course, do have higher rates of suicide and depression than other populations. Therefore, it is very evident that this change is needed. We need to recognize the qualifications of these providers and ensure that seniors do have access to them.

The majority of Wyoming communities are mental health professional shortage areas and probably will continue to be that way for some time. Because Medicare recognizes a limited number of mental health providers, Wyoming seniors have access to 537 providers, 247 social workers, and 121 psychiatrists.

This bill will double the number of available Medicare mental health providers. Seventy-five percent of 518 national designated mental health professional shortage areas are in rural areas. Again, not a surprise.

One-fifth of rural counties have no mental health services of any kind.

Frontier counties, of course, as they are designated in terms of mental health providers, are in even more dire straits.

Ninety-five percent do not have psychiatrists, 68 percent do not have psychologists, and 78 percent do not have social workers.

I am proud to be an author of this bill, along with Senator LINCOLN. I hope we will make some progress as soon as possible. It will perhaps not be this year, I imagine, but it will be as we move on into Medicare reform, which I think we will certainly undertake next year.

DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, I want to make a comment or two about the subject we are going to debate this morning. It seems to me certainly there is nothing more important for us to undertake than the matter of appropriations for defense. I think the Senate needs to be responsive to the President's request for defense funding in not adding non-defense spending to this Defense appropriations bill.

Our men and women in the military are overseas defending this country, and we must support them. This appropriations bill, as other appropriations bills, obviously should have been passed back in August or September, the end of the fiscal year. We have gone 2 months now without increasing those dollars. So I hope we can move forward, and I hope we do not hold this bill hostage to some kind of fairly unrelated spending. We ought to get right to it and do what the President has asked us to do.

He has indicated what we did in the \$40 billion in September is available. He has indicated when they need more money, whether it be for defense or do-

mestic terrorism, he will request more money. So I certainly hope we do not spend a great deal of time trying to add more dollars to Defense appropriations than what the President had asked. He has made it quite clear he intends to veto it if it is that way. I think that would be a real disadvantage to us all and to the people we are intending to assist.

I look forward to being able to deal with that, to come up with something we can pass through the Senate and the House, get to the President, and that we can support the President in this area of defense. I think we find ourselves sometimes talking about spending money when there is not a plan yet to use it. Domestic security is one of those things. We have seen meetings where they are working together and Governor Ridge has said when we get the plan we will ask for the money that is necessary if it is not now in the \$20 billion. So to go ahead and sort of put the money out there before those who are managing the program have had an opportunity to decide how that money can best be used is a mistake. I hope we do not do that.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. JOHNSON. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. JOHNSON. I ask unanimous consent to speak in morning business.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUPPORT THE ENERGY BILL AND THE RENEWABLE FUELS STANDARD

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I rise in strong support of the comprehensive energy bill that is being introduced today.

As we all know, there has been a great deal of discussion this year about the nation's energy situation. The increasing volatility in gasoline and diesel prices and the growing tension in the world from the terrorist attacks have affected all of us. There is a clear need for energy policies that ensure long term planning, homeland security, fuel diversity and a focus on new technologies.

To this end, I am very pleased that a comprehensive energy bill has been introduced in the Senate by my South Dakota colleague, Senator TOM DASCHLE. The bill is the result of many months of hard work by the Majority Leader and the chairmen of the committees of jurisdiction, including Senator JEFF BINGAMAN, the chairman of

the Energy Committee, of which I am a member. We have listened to the concerns of both those who run our energy systems and our constituents in crafting the legislation. The result is a balanced and thorough product that addresses most of the major segments of the energy system and looks ahead to the needs of future.

The bill covers a number of important areas, including incentives to increase oil and gas production and the nation's supplies of traditional fuels, streamlining of electricity systems and regulations, important environmental and conservation measures, and provisions to increase efficiency of vehicles and appliances.

One of the key provisions in the bill is the inclusion of a renewable fuels standard. Earlier this year, I introduced a bill with Senator CHUCK HAGEL of Nebraska, the Renewable Fuels for Energy Security Act of 2001, S. 1006, to ensure future growth for ethanol and biodiesel through the creation of a new renewable fuels content standard in all motor fuel produced and used in the U.S. I am pleased the framework of this bill is included in the comprehensive energy legislation.

Today, ethanol and biodiesel comprise less than one percent of all transportation fuel in the United States. 1.8 billion gallons is currently produced in the U.S. The energy bill's language would require that five billions gallons of transportation fuel be comprised of renewable fuel by 2012—nearly a tripling of the current ethanol and renewable fuel production.

There are great benefits of ethanol and renewable fuels for the environment and the economies of rural communities. We have many ethanol plants in South Dakota and more are being planned. These farmer-owned ethanol plants in South Dakota, and in neighboring states, demonstrate the hard work and commitment to serve a growing market for clean domestic fuels.

Based on current projections, construction of new plants will generate \$900 million in capital investment and tens of thousands of construction jobs all across rural America. For corn farmers, the price of corn is expected to rise between 20-30 cents per bushel. Farmers will have the opportunity to invest in these ethanol plants to capture a greater piece of the value-added profitability.

Combine this with the provisions of the energy bill and the potential economic impact for South Dakota is enormous.

Today, an important but under-emphasized future is biodiesel, which is cheaply produced from excess soybean oil. We all know that soybean prices are hovering near historic lows. Biodiesel production is small but has been growing steadily. A renewable fuel standard would greatly increase the prospects for bioproduction and benefit